

Friday 31st March 2023

Dear parents,

End of Term Letter – Spring Term 2023

Interviewing the large number of Year 12 prefect applicants earlier this term, I was struck by how many of them referred to their wish to support the many activities that take place outside the formal academic curriculum if they take up student leadership positions. In this week's poignant Year 13 Leavers Assembly, parents and students alike also spoke fondly of the wide variety of clubs, activities, trips and opportunities, and how these have contributed to make our school so special. This busy but very enjoyable term has certainly seen this 'Supercurriculum' at Victoria College in fine fettle. There have been events and successes in so many areas, including the CCF, sport, the creative arts, charity work and community engagement. They have been the result of outstanding endeavour from so many, and I've been so very proud to see so many of our community – staff, students, parents, OVs and governors – engaged in, and supporting, these wonderful activities and in doing so representing the College so well to a wider audience.

In music we see a widening range of musical interests on show. Amongst many other events we welcomed the inspirational Cambridge 'Kings Men' to work with our Voces Victoria and other budding student vocalists, saw 46 of our students engage superbly in the Jersey Eisteddfod Choral showcase, celebrated 3 of our students reaching the PWC Young Musician of the Year final; enjoyed collaborative work with other schools and music groups in the stunning Vaughan Williams String Concert, and of course we welcome Salisbury Cathedral Choir to our Great Hall this very week. A real highlight was the inimitable House Music, with an incredible array of individual and collective talent on display across the two evenings. Sartorius produced a masterclass of skill and participation to be crowned victors.

On community, House and charity engagement, there have been so many areas to celebrate. We've seen superb engagement with the Durrell Young Tortoise Trail competition, with 6 student winners getting to realise their House-based designs on the tortoise models over two days in the Art department, ready for showcasing on Island from 16th June. With Durrell one of our key school charities this year, supporting their work as well as promoting creativity in our students has been fantastic. We have also been delighted with the general approach to supporting charities, with senior students for example recently organising a very well-attended cake sale to support the Syria / Turkey earthquake appeal, and many others working with our own Mr Falle – Head of Sixth Form – in the Grace Crocker February Challenge, and with Mr Parkes in breaking the record for laps completed in the annual Swimathon. House spirit in general continues to flourish. We have welcomed House Chess and the House General Knowledge Quiz into the programme of activities. We also saw our Houses enjoy some time together at their annual House meals, with younger and older students getting to know each other a little better.

Our collaborative work with JCG continues to develop, with a Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) day for students in both schools and ongoing and Year 7 joint PSHE lessons. Both schools also proactively engaged with the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) taskforce, with students volunteering to help construct the questions in the student survey that went out to the whole Island.

Our World of Opportunity

Senior students also spoke together at the International Women's Day Breakfast hosted by the Jersey Women's Refuge, and reaffirmed the collective commitment to developing positive and respectful relationships.

Our CCF has had a fantastic term. Following the passing out parade in January, the cadets won the Inter Cadet Forces STEM competition and also saw success at RAF Halton with the Royal Air Squadron Trophy Competition. Some highlights on the sporting front include the senior students' participation at the Rosslyn Park 7s tournament in the UK, the Year 8 football tour to Southampton, our first student ski trip in many years, and excellent engagement with rugby fixtures, including fine performances across the year groups against Chichester, Jersey Reds and of course in House Rugby (Braithwaite taking the honours this year).

The end of a term always brings a touch of sadness as we say farewell to leaving staff. Ms Sharon Joynt will leave the Admissions Registrar role after making a hugely positive impact this year on our admissions processes. Ms Orla Priestley leaves us after 8 years at the College, during which time she has held many roles including teacher of Maths and Senior Common Room President, but perhaps none more so impactful as our SENDCO over the last 12 months, where she has been at the forefront of supporting our students with additional needs and made huge strides in helping us to be a more inclusive community. Mr Adam May is retiring after serving 27 years as a key member of the site team; his multi-faceted role of Caretaker was one everyone in College valued hugely and he was right at the heart of keeping the College running smoothly. Finally, Ms Pat Lucas – long term supply teacher of 8 years at Victoria College, is finally stepping away from teaching to also enjoy a well-earned retirement. Her enthusiasm, diligence to her craft and wicked sense of humour will be greatly missed. We wish all of our departing staff every success with their next steps and I know I speak for the whole community in saying a big thank you.

I will sign off by saying thank you for your current and future support as we continue our work to make Victoria College a place everyone can feel proud of, can feel welcome in, and can feel they can contribute to. Parental engagement continues to be a priority and we will continue to develop opportunities to build positive relationships going forward. I hope you now know that College warmly welcomes your support and your constructive input. Many of you contributed to the insight gathering on the upcoming new Strategic Plan 2023-28, and I look forward to sharing updates with you on this next term. Shortly after Easter we will release our now-annual Kirkland Rowell Survey, so we can gauge school improvement since last year.

The long winter nights are drawing to an end, spring has sprung and the long summer days are approaching. The summer term is always a great time in College, though of course many of our students have examinations – public and internal – at the forefront of their minds. I wish them all the very best in their final preparations over the next few weeks. For the whole community, I wish you all a very happy Easter break; do spend quality time with those you love in the weeks ahead, give generously, be kind, and look after each other. I look forward to seeing everyone on Monday, 17th April.

With kind regards,



Dr Gareth J A Hughes
Headteacher